

URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL  
OF ORMSKIRK.

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ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

Medical Officer of Health,


1898.

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ORMSKIRK :

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# ANNUAL REPORT FOR 1898.

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*To the Chairman and Members of the Urban  
District Council of Ormskirk.*

GENTLEMEN,

I have pleasure in presenting to you my Twenty-fourth Annual Report of the Urban Sanitary District of Ormskirk for the year 1898.

## POPULATION.

As per the Census Returns for the following decades:—

Year of Census	...	1851	1861	1871	1881	1891
Population	...	6183	6424	6127	6651	6298

From the above table it will be seen that there has been a decrease of 353 inhabitants during the last decade. The Population at the present time as per Census taken 24th October, 1898, is 6797, being an increase of 499 made up as follows—under 5 years 833; 5 to 15 years 1409; adults 4555.

WARD POPULATION.—Aughton Ward ... 1591  
Lathom Ward ... 1617  
Knowsley Ward ... 1914  
Scarisbrick Ward ... 1675

COURT AND ALLEY POPULATION.—This amounts to 1298, occupying 376 houses, less 37 unoccupied, mostly through being condemned as unfit for habitation.

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## BIRTHS.

The Births registered during the year were 229 (116 males and 113 females), giving a birth-rate of 36·3 per 1000, as compared with 222, or 35·2 per 1000 the previous year, being 7 more than those registered for the year 1897.

The following table shows the births during each quarter of the year :—

		Males.	Females.	Total.
March Quarter...	...	27	26	53
June „ ...	...	32	28	60
September „ ...	...	37	29	66
December „ ...	...	20	30	50
		<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
Totals	...	116	113	229

### DEATHS.

The Deaths registered during the same period were 191, consisting of 97 males and 94 females, giving a death-rate of 30·3 per 1000, as against 30·0 per 1000 the previous year.

The following table shows the number of deaths during each quarter of the year :—

		Males.	Females.	Total.
March Quarter...	...	20	22	42
June „ ...	...	25	22	47
September „ ...	...	30	24	54
December „ ...	...	22	26	48
		<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
Totals	...	97	94	191

### DEATHS FROM ZYMOTICS FROM 1890 TO 1898 INCLUSIVE.

	1890	1891	1892	1893	1894	1895	1896	1897	1898
Measles ...	8	...	...	5	...	...	7	2	...
Typhoid Fever	1	1	1	1	3	2	...	2	...
Diphtheria ...	...	...	...	1	...	2	1	2	11
Scarlet Fever..	1	10	...	...	1	3	2	2	...
Diarrhœa ...	2	1	1	9	4	7	7	11	7
Wh'p'g Cough	2	...	...	...	3	...	...	1	...
Total Deaths..	14	12	2	16	11	14	17	20	18

From the above it will be seen that Zymotic diseases during the year caused 18 deaths, giving a death-rate of 2·8 per 1000, against 20, or 3·1 per 1000 last year.

The high rate of Zymotic mortality is attributable to the number of deaths from Diphtheria during the months of January, February, March and November; the outbreak in my opinion being due to the wet-privy middens and the imperfect ventilation of the sewers.

Total No. of deaths from all sources 191 or 30·3 per 1000.

Deaths in the Workhouse ... .. 66 ,, 10·4 ,,

Deaths in District, exclusive of  
Workhouse ... .. 125 ,, 19·8 ,,

Deaths of persons in District not  
belonging thereto ... .. 53 ,, 8·2 ,,

Deaths of persons belonging to  
District ... .. 138 ,, 21·9 ,,

Deaths from Zymotic diseases ... 18 ,, 2·8 ,,

The Infantile mortality for children under one year was at the rate of 4·1 per 1000, against 7·1 the previous year.

**TABLE OF DEATHS** *during the year 1898, in the Urban Sanitary District of Ormskirk, classified according to Ages and Localities.*

NAMES OF LOCALITIES adopted for the purpose of these Statistics; Public In- stitutions being shown as separate localities.	Mortality from all causes at subjoined ages.						
	At all Ages.	Under 1 year.	1 and under 5	5 and under 15.	15 and under 25.	25 and under 65.	65 and up- wards.
The Urban Sanitary } District of Ormskirk }	121	25	24	6	6	36	24
Ormskirk Infectious } Hospital ... .. }	4	...	2	1	1	...	...
The Ormskirk Union } Workhouse .. .. }	66	1	2	...	3	27	33
TOTALS	191	26	28	7	10	63	57

The subjoined numbers have also to be taken into account in judging of the above records of mortality.

Deaths occurring within the district among persons not belonging thereto.	53	1	2	...	...	26	24
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### **INFECTIOUS SICKNESS.**

Fifty-eight new cases of infectious sickness were notified during the year, as against 50 the previous year, enumerated as follows:—Scarlet Fever, 8; Diphtheria, 34; Typhoid Fever, 7; Erysipelas, 7; Puerperal Fever, 1; Membranous Croup, 1.

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### **CORONER'S INQUESTS.**

Four inquests have been held during the year, none suicidal.

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### **INFECTIOUS HOSPITAL.**

Sixteen cases were admitted into the Hospital, 4 being Scarlet Fever, one Typhoid Fever, and 11 Diphtheria.

The Steam Disinfector was used 12 times for the disinfection of clothes, bedding, &c.

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### **SANITARY MATTERS.**

The Courts and Alleys of the town have been systematically swept and cleansed, the drains flushed and disinfected, and defects attended to. During the summer the courts were attended to on an average once every fortnight. The total number of visits made being about 850. Since the visit of Dr. Monckton Copeman, in October last, the Courts have been visited about once every 9 or 10 days, and in summer it is expected to do so weekly. That this work is proving effective is shewn by the fact that the Council's men have only found 5 stopped gully grids in the courts against 20 during last year. The Surveyor and Medical Officer have reported 26 nuisances to the Council, made up as follows:—Badly constructed ashpits and insufficient water closet accommodation, 17. Defective yard pavements and drains, 9. Keeping pigs and depositing dung contrary to the Byelaws, 2. These nuisances have

been remedied mostly without receiving legal notices from the Council. In addition to the above 16 letters have been written by the Surveyor, pointing out nuisances which were attended to before being brought before the notice of the Council. 1 summons was taken out for keeping pigs within the prescribed distance of 50 feet, and, it being a second offence, the offender was fined £1 and costs.

At the same sessions a summons taken out against the same person for slaughtering on unlicensed premises was dismissed on payment of costs.

38 houses have been condemned by the Council (on my representation) as being unfit for human habitation, and in the majority of the cases the houses have been closed, pulled down, or re-constructed.

20 notices to abate overcrowding have been served ; all of which have been complied with.

### **NIGHTSOIL DISPOSAL.**

At the commencement of the financial year the Council purchased a horse and cart, and now employ their own men to empty the ashpits instead of letting the work by contract. This has increased the expenditure for scavenging considerably, but there is much more satisfaction than formerly. The ashpits are now attended to more regularly, and emptied before causing a nuisance.

A piece of land has been obtained on the outskirts of the town on which to tip the refuse from the ashpits, the saleable part of which is carted away by the neighbouring farmers, the rubbish being buried. It is estimated that this arrangement can be carried out for at least 10 years, when some other means may become practicable for disposing of the town's refuse.

Liberal quantities of disinfectants have been supplied to the ratepayers free of charge, about 120 gallons of fluid and 2 tons of powder being distributed during the past 12 months.

### WATER ANALYSIS.

One sample of water from the Waterworks has been submitted to the County Analyst for examination, the following being a copy of the analysis furnished by him. The result expressed in parts per 100,000 :—

Mark and denomination of sample...	Well 56ft. from surface
Total solid matter in solution... ..	16·2
Organic Carbon ... ..	Traces only
Organic Nitrogen ... ..	Traces only
Ammonia ... ..	·002
Ammonia from Organic matter (by distillation with Alkaline Permanganate) ... ..	·006
Nitrogen as Nitrates ... ..	·405
Combined Chlorine ... ..	2·85
Hardness ... ..	Moderate No Organisms

Good water for domestic use.

As witness my hand this 15th March, 1898,

J. CAMPBELL BROWN, D.Sc.,  
At University College, Liverpool.

It will be seen from the above analysis that the water still maintains its high character as being a good water for domestic use, and entirely free from organisms.

### COW SHEDS.

There are 11 cow sheds in the town, from all of which milk is sold. The majority are in a very unsatisfactory condition, and totally unfit for the purpose. For further information I must refer you to the report made by myself and the Surveyor on the 26th November, 1897.

### NEW ACTS.

On 26th July, 1898, the Council sealed regulations under the Dairies, Cow Sheds and Milk Shops Order, 1885, but they have not yet been returned by the Local Government Board.



*Information supplied by the Surveyor and Inspector, Mr.  
R. C. IVY, A.M.I.C.E., M.S.I.*

### **WATERWORKS.**

Early in the year the defective brickwork at the top of the well was removed and replaced with blue vitrified bricks, set in cement, to above the level of the adjoining ground, which completely prevents any surface water percolating into the well as heretofore.

A new, direct-acting vertical well-pump and engine is now being erected over the well. The new engine, which is much more powerful than the existing one, will, when completed, be used alternately with the horizontal engine, and the town will thus be safeguarded against breakdowns.

### **NEW WATER MAINS.**

About 450 yards of new 3in. water mains have been laid to supply new streets and building sites which are chiefly being opened out by Lord Derby, K.G.

The yield of water during the year has been ample and no cause for anxiety has been felt in that connection. The supply to consumers has been constant, and has averaged 18·88 gallons per head per day.

Legal proceedings were taken out against three persons for wilfully wasting water; the magistrates inflicting a fine of 5/- and costs in each case.

### **SEWER FLUSHING AND VENTILATION.**

The main sewers of the town have been regularly flushed and disinfected, and owing to complaints as to sewer emanations from the open manholes, the Council in August last relaid about 300 yards of the main outfall sewer and constructed new detritus channels at the entrance to the settling tanks. Before the work was done the outfall sewer was laid at a lower level than the outlet pipe, which discharged from the tanks, and in consequence the sewage was always kept backed up into the outfall sewer for some considerable distance. The pipes have now been re-laid at a flatter, but still self-cleansing gradient, and deliver into the settling tanks 3in. above the water level, consequently there is no back pounding. The raising of the outfall sewer

has proved very beneficial as the sewage is now discharged in a comparatively fresh condition, whereas previously the sewage was backed up to such an extent as to cause excessive putrefaction and consequent nuisance from smells. A current of air is now admitted to the sewer and the smells from the manholes in the town have considerably abated. The invert of the 24in. outfall pipes, before alteration, was 21 ins. below the water level in the tanks, consequently there was always 21 inches of sewage in the pipes. The gradient of the 24in. outfall is now 1 in 1,200, having a discharging velocity of 2·059 feet per second.

### **VENTILATING COLUMNS.**

The Council have recently purchased 6 upcast ventilating columns, each 18ft. high, and are about to erect the same at the summits of sewers in various districts of the town.

### **SEWAGE DISPOSAL WORKS.**

The work at the Sewage Farm, which consisted of laying down intermittent downward filtration plots, bacteriological filters of coke breeze, alterations and additions to existing settling tanks, and underdraining the whole of the farm under irrigation has now been completed, and excellent results are being obtained. The effluent is quite clear and sparkling, and no complaints are now made by the Ribble Joint Committee, whose chief inspector, Mr. Naylor, C.E., reported in October last that the effluent discharged was of a non-polluting character. The surface water drainage scheme has also been completed, about 4,000 yards of surface water sewers having been laid during the past year. This scheme has improved matters at the Sewage Farm very considerably, in fact to such an extent that the outfall pipes have not been full since the completion of the separation scheme, whereas the sewage used formerly to frequently back up through the manholes and flood the road near the farm.

### **LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD ENQUIRY.**

On the 16th November, 1898, Colonel A. G. Durnford, R.E., held an enquiry, on the application of the Council, to borrow money for the following schemes:— £1,600 for the erection of Fire Engine Station and Depot purposes; £250 for works of Water Supply; £220 for

purposes of Public Offices; £80 for Public Walks and Pleasure Grounds; and £65 for a Fire Escape. The sanctions for these loans have all been received with the exception of the Public Walks and Pleasure Grounds scheme, which is only a very small matter, and is now pending owing to a question as to the conveyance of the land.

The Council adopted the Private Street Works' Act, 1892, on November 29th, 1898, and the same came into operation on 9th January, 1899.

Under this Act the Council propose dealing with the Paving, Sewering, Lighting, &c., of the Courts and Alleys, which will, I feel satisfied, effect a great improvement in the sanitary condition of the same.

### **NEW STREETS AND PROPERTY.**

During the year the Council passed plans for 47 new houses, in addition to alterations and improvements to existing buildings.

The Earl of Derby, K.G., has in course of construction 4 New Streets which will open out new building sites.

### **MAIN ROAD IMPROVEMENTS.**

On the St. Helens main road the Council have reconstructed about a mile of boulder pavement, substituting a composite carriage way of one half granite cubes and half macadam, making the road one uniform width of 36ft. throughout the entire length. The land for widening the road has been given by the Earl of Derby, K.G.

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In conclusion, I am of opinion that very satisfactory progress has been made during the past year, and look forward with confidence to the general sanitary condition of the town being considerably improved during the ensuing year.

I remain,

Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen,

Your obedient servant,

**W. ANDERTON,**

*Medical Officer of Health.*



